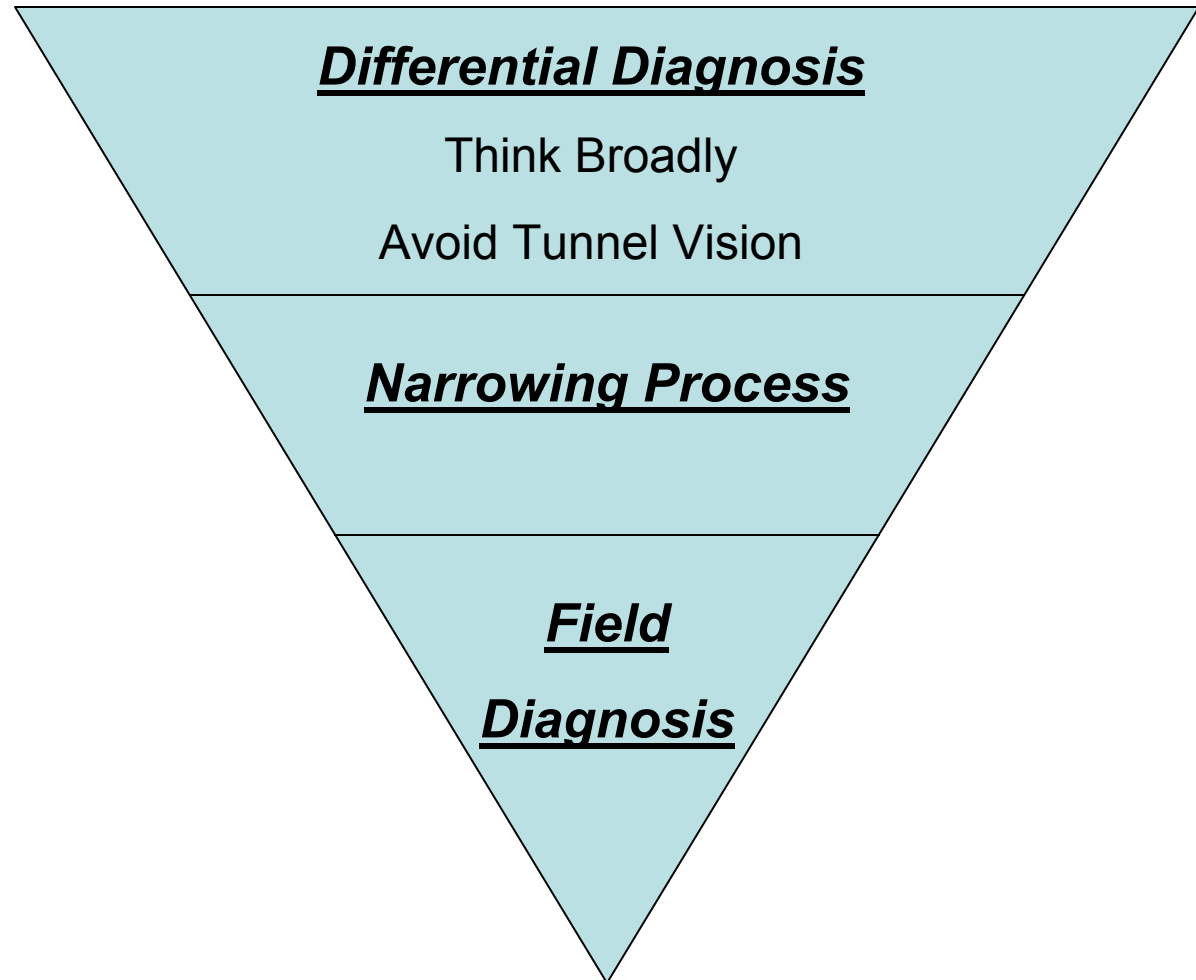


Assessment-Based Management

Inverted Pyramid Reasoning



Effective Assessment

- The Foundation for Patient Care
 - You can't treat what you don't find
 - You can't find if you can't gather, synthesize, evaluate information

Effective Assessment

**Good information
makes good
decisions!**

Effective Assessment

- History
 - 80% of diagnosis
 - Particularly important with medical patients
 - Do not let your suspicions or patient past history affect your questioning

Effective Assessment

- Physical Exam
 - Particularly important in trauma
 - Also very important in unresponsive medical patients
 - Focused vs. Detailed

Effective Assessment

- Pattern Recognition
 - Look for “pictures” that characterize specific types of patients or situations
 - Expand your knowledge base
 - Build direct and indirect experience

Field Diagnosis

- Diagnosis = Combination of pattern recognition, intuition
- Base treatment plan on your:
 - Field diagnosis
 - Protocols/standing orders
 - Professional judgment

Factors Influencing Assessment/Decision Making

- Personal Attitudes
- Uncooperative Patients
- Patient Compliance
- Distracting Injuries
- Environmental Considerations
- Personnel Considerations

Personal Attitudes

Preconceived notions can “short circuit” data collection and pattern recognition

Uncooperative Patients

- “Just another drunk” “Frequent flyers”
- What are the other possibilities?
 - Hypoxia
 - Hypovolemia
 - Hypoglycemia
 - Head injury

How would you want a member of
your family treated?

Patient Compliance

- Prior negative experiences
- Cultural differences
- Language barriers

Distracting Injuries

- The most obvious problem usually isn't what's killing the patient
- Be systematic in your assessment
- Avoid making a diagnosis before you have all the information you need

Environmental Considerations

- Scene chaos
- Violence
- Dangerous situations
- High noise levels
- Crowds of bystanders

Personnel Considerations

- Too many helpers are as much of a problem as too few
- Stage personnel, bring them into the scene as needed
- Assign specific tasks
- Do NOT do assessment, management by committee!

Scene Choreography

- Have a plan

- Team Leader

- ✓ Patient contact
- ✓ History
- ✓ Physical exam
- ✓ Presents patient
- ✓ Handles documentation
- ✓ EMS Command

- Patient Care Provider

- ✓ Scene cover
- ✓ Scene information
- ✓ Talks with bystanders
- ✓ Vital signs
- ✓ Performs interventions
- ✓ Triage Officer

The Right Equipment

- **Infection Control**
 - Gloves
 - Goggles
- **Airway Control**
 - Oral airways
 - Nasal airways
 - Suction/catheters
 - Laryngoscope
 - ET tubes, stylettes, syringes, tape
- **Breathing**
 - Pocket mask
 - BVM, masks
 - Oxygen tank, regulator
 - Oxygen masks, tubing
 - Occlusive dressings
 - Chest decompression kit
- **Circulation**
 - Dressings
 - Bandages, tape
 - BP Cuff, stethoscope
 - Note pad, pen, pencil

The Right Equipment

- Disability
 - Rigid collars
 - Flashlight
- Dysrhythmia
 - ECG monitor
 - Defibrillator
- Exposure
 - Scissors
 - Blankets to cover patient

The Right Equipment

- IV kit
- Drug box

Approach to Patient

- Scene Size-Up
- Initial Assessment
- Focused or Detailed History and Physical Exam
- Ongoing Assessment

Scene Size-Up

- Body substance isolation
- Scene safety
- How many patients?
- Mechanism of injury/Nature of illness?
- Additional equipment or support?

Initial Assessment

- General impression
 - Appearance
 - Work of breathing
 - Circulation to skin
- Mental status (AVPU)
- Airway
- Breathing
- Circulation

Initial Assessment

- If you find a life threat, fix it!
- If you can't fix it, try to make it someone else's problem ASAP!

Load & Go
vs.
Stay & Play

History and Physical Exam

- Focused vs. Detailed?
 - Trauma patient, AMS or significant mechanism
 - Trauma patient, isolated injury
 - Medical patient, responsive
 - Medical patient, unresponsive

Ongoing Assessment

- Unstable patient:
Every 5 minutes
- Stable patient: Every
15 minutes
- Mental status
- ABCs
- Transport priority
- Vital signs
- Assessment of
problem areas
- Effectiveness of
interventions
- Management plan

Key Principles

- Continuously check for potential life threats
- Maintain a high index of suspicion
- When in doubt, treat for the worst case scenario

Effective Patient Presentation

- Establish credibility, trust
- Efficiently transfers critical information
- Ensures on-line orders for needed procedures

Poor Presentations
Compromise Care

Effective Patient Presentation

- Less than one minute
- Concise, clear
- Little jargon
- Consistent format
- Include pertinent positives, negatives
- Conclude with specific actions, requests, questions

Effective Patient Presentation

- Plan ahead
- Know what information will be needed
- Use pre-set formats
- Use pre-printed forms